Remembers Rich Mullins October 11, 1997

kidbrothers.net/rmml/rmml189.html

Date: 18 November 1997
To: RichMailList
Subject: [RichMailList 189]: 20: Countdown Tribute transcript

Hi Rich Fans,

Here is the transcription of the **20: The Countdown Magazine** tribute to Rich Mullins originally aired and simulcast to the Internet on Light 99 FM on October 11 and 12, 1997. The broadcast was available for purchase, but that availability has expired.

Special thanks to my friend Joan Slonecker for transcribing it, and to **Rick Tarrant** of **Communion Communications** for permission to post it.

(Editor's Note: The program has many excerpts from interviews with Rich along with excerpts of songs. I will put the songs in parenthesis as they are intertwined with Rich speaking.)

(Step by Step)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

Rich: (Sing Your Praise to the Lord) I really believe that we are dust. I plan on living to be 80 and I figure I'm not even half way there. People say its not fair that people should die when they are 18. I go, wow, its unfair that we should be able to live until we are that old. (Awesome God) Christ said those who worship worship in spirit and in truth. He didn't say they worship with the hair on the back of their necks raised. I think everyone will be surprised 20 years from now that Awesome God will have completely fallen out of use.

Rick Tarrant: I will not be surprised if 20 years from now to hear Awesome God being sung at our church.

Rich: Either way you go.

Rich: (Step by Step) Well, Step by Step Beaker wrote. So it is one of two songs that I have ever recorded that I didn't write and I think it was the first song that he ever wrote that he would play in front of people...(Creed) And this is what liturgy offers that all the razzmatazz of our modern worship can't touch. (My One Thing) (We Are Not As Strong As We Think We Are) I think writing-wise I am probably more of a quilter than a weaver cuz I just get a little scrap here and a little scrap there and sew them together and... (If I Stand) Those people who did the greatest things for God were the people who weren't trying to do anything at all. They were just simply being obedient.... I don't think you read the Bible to know truth. I think you read the Bible to find God. (Screen Door) A spiritual thing is folding your clothes at the end of the day. A spiritual thing is making your bed. A spiritual thing is taking cookies to your neighbor that is shut in or raking their front lawn because they are too old to do it. That is spirituality. (Let Mercy Lead) I am very hurt at the apathy in the church. I am very hurt over the determination of the government to destroy life. (Elijah) I do long for heaven. Someday God will destroy injustice. Someday there will be a judgment because we have a loving and a forgiving Father. Maybe we will survive it... I enjoy the idea of a corporate identity. When I come into church I am no longer Rich Mullins, a music education student. I am no longer Rich Mullins a guy who grew up in Indiana. I am no longer Rich Mullins a guy who has a record contract. All of a sudden I am a member of the kingdom of God. (Hold Me Jesus) Oh, my favorite hymn would be Be Thou My Vision cuz its Irish (laughs). (While the Nations Rage) (Alrightokuhhuhamen) I think my dad had that adolescent illusion that he was going to live forever. (Boy Like Me/Man Like You) I think he never really told a lot of people in his family how much he loved them because, first of all, he assumed that we knew. And second of all, I think he always assumed that there would be plenty of opportunity.

John Rivers: Today on 20: The Countdown Magazine we embark on a different journey - that of remembering truly the greatest Christian music songwriter of our age, Rich Mullins. On Saturday morning, September 20, 1997, the world awakened as usual, the sun rose, the birds sang, breakfast was prepared, newspapers thrown and read. As the weekend unfolded, the news began to spread - Rich Mullins is dead. On Sunday morning, September 21, 1997, some rose to read an obscure one inch obituary in their Sunday paper. It said, "Lostant, Illinois. AP. Rich Mullins, a best-selling contemporary Christian singer was run over and killed by a tractor trailer after being flipped out of a sports utility vehicle that went out of control. Rich Mullins, 42, died Friday night after he and his drummer, Mitchell McVicker were driving southbound on Interstate 39 near Lostant, Illinois, said Sheriff Sergeant Greg Jacobsen. It was unclear who was driving. Mullins of Bonito, New Mexico was perhaps best known for his song, Our God is an Awesome God."

(Awesome God)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins

John Rivers: One of the people who had the privilege of spending some time with Rich Mullins was 20: The Countdown Magazine's producer Rick Tarrant.

Rich: In terms of the scope of eternity, I really believe that we are dust. I really believe that I will someday be dead no matter how good my songs are. Someday I will decay. I will rot and there will be nothing left.

Rick Tarrant: An old recording of Our God is an Awesome God

Rich: Because I write pop music, it is all very disposable. I think everyone would be surprised twenty years from now that that song will have completely fallen out of use.

Rick Tarrant: I would not be surprised if twenty years from now to hear Awesome God sung in our church.

Rich: Either way you go. In terms of eternity, those people who did the greatest things for God were the people who weren't trying to do anything at all. They were just simply being obedient

Rick Tarrant: Those are the people God can use.

Rich. Those are the people God can use. And I want to be one of them. If God should use me, that would be great but if He doesn't there is a very interesting thing you can do. In the gospel of Mark or in any of the four gospels, you go through the gospels and you say, what people are absolutely essential to this story? So Mary is essential to the story because Mary had to give birth to Jesus. And you could say, well someone else could have. But lets say that if she wouldn't have done it then the story wouldn't have happened. So, you have God who chose to become flesh, you have Mary who gave Him flesh, you have Jesus who was God in the flesh or who was the child of Mary and God, you have Pontius Pilate who had, in an artificial sense, the power to kill Christ, you have Judas Iscariot who betrayed Christ and handed him over to the bad guys, you have whoever it was that nailed Him up to the cross. Out of those people that God used to accomplish His will in the gospel, only a couple of them were very nice people. Most of them were bad people. We all want to be useful to God. Well, its no big deal. God can use anybody. God used Nebuchadnezzar. God used Judas Iscariot. Its not a big deal to be used by God and the shocking thing in the book of Mark, and the reason why it is so shocking is because Mark is the briefest of all the gospels but he has these terrific little details and one of the little details is that it says, "and Jesus called to Him those that He wanted." And you

realize that out of the twelve people that He wanted, only one was essential to His goal in coming to earth. The other eleven people were useless to Christ but they were wanted by Christ. And I kind of go, I would much rather have God want me than have God use me.

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins

(Hold Me Jesus)

John Rivers: You're listening to a very special broadcast of 20: The Countdown Magazine as we endeavor to pay tribute to a man we can never really repay, Rich Mullins.

(break)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins. I'm John Rivers. We are foregoing our normal programming to honor the heart and life of a very very dear and special friend, Rich Mullins.

Rick Tarrant: What do you hope to accomplish when you do an album after you have gone to all the effort of recording and overdubbing and vocals and bringing in other people? What is the end of it?

Rich: The end is that God made man. He created him in His own image. He created him out of dust. He breathed into him the breath of life. Man became a living soul. He gave man sexuality. He created them male and female. And he gave man work. And I am just doing my work. I am not trying to write great albums. I'm not trying to write great songs. I'm not trying to do any of that. What I'm trying to do is be faithful. If I were a plumber, most plumbers don't say, "Man I'm going to come up with the most original arrangement of pipes here." But when you flush your toilet, if things go the way they should go, you are very thankful that the plumber was doing their job.

Rick Tarrant: This is true.

Rich: But I think that part of our identity as human beings is that we have work, that we have things to do. And I am gifted as a musician. I am gifted as a writer and so I have to do that out of obedience. I am not gifted as a singer. I have a weird voice. I have a terrible speaking voice and when I sing its not as weird as when I talk so I should probably sing more and talk less. But, nevertheless, I don't like my voice even when I am singing and people say, "Why do you sing then?" and I go, "Because it is the most reiterated command in the whole Bible." And I figure there must be a reason why it says over and over and over, sing sing sing sing sing. I also kind of go, this is a lot easier than loving my enemies so maybe I should start with the easy stuff and maybe by the time I am really old I will have been able to tie the more complicated knot.

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

(Sing Your Praise to the Lord)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins. I am John Rivers. Rich's walk with Christ was highly influenced by a book by Brennan Manning entitled The Ragamuffin Gospel. And in that book Mr. Manning wrote, among other things, "The Ragamuffin Gospel reveals that Jesus forgives sins including sins of the flesh, that He is comfortable with sinners who remember how to show compassion, but that He cannot and will not have a relationship with pretenders in the Spirit." Rich Mullins was certainly no pretender. He was the real deal.

Rich Mullins: The preaching of Brennan Manning - we practice silence in the truck a lot of times so we hardly ever have a tape on or anything like that. But we don't have any rules - you can do what you want. But Beaker put in a Brennan Manning tape and I really didn't want to hear it because I didn't know who he was and don't ordinarily like preaching. I went "Argh, great." Well, I think about five minutes into it I think I had to pull off the road because I was just bawling my eyes out. I thought, what I am experiencing here is that I have gone to church ever since I was wee little, probably from when I was a week old, and this is the first sermon in my memory that is the preaching of the Good News of the Gospel of Christ. He's not preaching about an issue. He's not preaching about a theological position. He's not preaching about anything except this is the Good News. And I thought, wow, this is what I am hungry to hear. This is what I am dying to hear.

(Let Mercy Lead)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

Rich: People say "Why do you write music?" and I always say "Well, how many of Wesley's sermons do you know?" And I've talked to a lot of good Methodists and they don't know any of them. Then I say, "Well, how many of Wesley's hymns do you know?" and most church goers know at least a good solid dozen hymns that Wesley wrote. Most pagans know at least a couple. And I kind of go, that is why I write music and not sermons.

John Rivers: This is John Rivers. Our tribute to Rich Mullins will continue in a moment on 20: The Countdown Magazine.

(Break)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins. I'm John Rivers. The one thing that was central to all Rich said and all that Rich did was that we must die to our

own self wills and our own selfishness and let Jesus' life replace our own.

Rich: The hardest part of being a Christian is surrendering and that is where the real struggle happens. Once we have overcome our own desire to be elevated, our own desire to be recognized, our own desire to be independent and all those things that we value very much because we are Americans and we are part of this American culture. Once we have overcome that struggle then God can use us as a part of His body to accomplish what the body of Christ was left here to accomplish.

(Sometimes by Step)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

Rich: My twenties were very very disturbed years because it was the time of the real battle between my will to submit my will and my will to assert my will. I wanted to love God and at the same time I resented God for being who He is because if He was God then I couldn't be. And I would flip-flop back and forth between saying thank you God that you are the Lord and that I am not because even I am a rotten steward I would be a terrible Lord. I would flip-flop between saying that and saying yeah but we are going to do this my way right now. So I do love you but I'm going to go my way and so blink for a long time. You know, by the time you've gone through that long enough after you have beaten your head up against that wall for a good decade, you come out of it and you have accomplished all of the damage that God wanted to save you from. All you can do at that point is go, "Wow! I am so sorry that when You told me to walk in faith, I refused to do it. And now I know why You gave the commands that You gave. Now I know why You say what You say. And I wish that I didn't have to know that in order to obey it."

(Growing Young)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins

Rich: Yeah and especially in a day when so much emphasis and so much pressure is put on us to esteem ourselves I kind of go, wow, I don't know how anyone can wake up with morning breath and pillow head and feel any self esteem. (laughing) That is not the sort of thing I want to put my faith in. And in the church it is unbelievable to me that this whole foolishness about esteeming yourself has leaked into the church. I kind of go, "Christ didn't ask us to esteem ourselves." I think if Christ were asked, I think He would probably say, "Look buddy, you would be lucky if you could forget yourself. If you could lose yourself, you would be luckier than if you found yourself." It would be wonderful if you knew the names of the trees between your house and where you work, between your house and your church. If you knew that that was a tulip tree and you knew that that was

a red bud. It would be great if you knew the names of the constellations. It would be great if you knew something about your neighbor. It would be a lucky thing for you if you forgot yourself, if you lost yourself. I remember when my brother and his fiancŽ were eating a meal with us and it was absolutely sickening because we were trying to eat here and they were staring at each other in the eyes and I'm going, "Golly, can you not wait until football." And then I realized, wow, what a terrific thing when you are so in love that you forget how obnoxious love looks to everybody else. (Rick laughing in background). How I wish we were all French. Although I really appreciate modesty and I detest public displays but nevertheless, what a wonderful thing when you are so caught up in a moment when you are so lost in an experience that you forget to straighten your tie or to comb your hair. Why esteem yourself? Forget yourself. You'll have a lot more fun.

John Rivers: This is John Rivers. A tribute to Rich Mullins will continue in a moment on 20: The Countdown Magazine.

(break)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins. (78 Eatonwood Green) Rich loved God's word. He once wrote, "The Bible is not a book for the faint of heart. It is a book full of all the greed and glory and violence and tenderness and sex and betrayal that benefits mankind. It is not the collection of pretty little anecdotes mouthed by pious little church mice. It does not so much nibble at our shoe as it cuts to the heart and splits the marrow from bone to bone. It does not give us answers fitted to our smaller minded questions but truth that goes beyond what we even know to ask."

Rich: I don't think you read the Bible to know truth. I think you read the Bible to find God, that we encounter Him there. Paul says that the scriptures are God's breath and I kind of go, wow, so let's breathe this as deeply as possible. And this is what liturgy offers that all the razzmatazz of our modern worship can't touch. You don't go home from church going, "Oh I am just moved to tears." You go home from church going, "Wow, I just took communion and you know what? If Augustine were alive today, he would have had it with me and maybe he is and maybe he did."

(Creed)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remember Rich Mullins.

Rich: A lot of times we think something spiritual is happening and it is merely aesthetics. That is why it always bugs me at the end of a concert someone will say, "Wow the Spirit really worked" and I kind of go, "How would you even be able to know that? It was so noisy in here tonight. How would you know if the Spirit was working?" "Well, I was really

moved." Well, that is an emotional thing. That's not a spiritual thing. A spiritual thing is folding your clothes at the end of the day. A spiritual thing is making your bed. A spiritual thing is taking cookies to your neighbor that is shut in or raking their front lawn because they are too old to do it. That's spirituality. Getting a warm, oozy feeling about God is an emotional thing. There is nothing wrong with it. I think there is nothing more practical than real spirituality. But nothing more fun than just a good heartfelt emotional experience of God because I think emotions are good. They are only dangerous when we come away from an experience where we were emotionally manipulated and we confuse that with being convicted. I think conviction - there is an emotion that accompanies that but it certainly goes deeper than just coming away going, "Oh isn't God neat? Two different worlds."

(Calling Out Your Name)

Rich: The first line of that I wrote when I was on tour with Amy Grant on the Unguarded tour I think or whatever tour that was. That was years and years ago.

Rick Tarrant: That long ago, yeah.

Rich: We were driving through Nebraska and there was a big beautiful full moon and I don't know how it happens but I just thought well, the moon moved past Nebraska and spoke laughter on those cold Dakota hills. Buffalo Bill. (laughs) That was where it started. I went, "Oh I will use that someday. I have no idea where but I know I will use it." And so I just kind of stored it away. Then I was riding my motorcycle in the Flint Hills and pretty much finished the song there. This would have been six years later that I finished it. But I do that. I keep little scraps. I think writing-wise, I am probably more of a quilter than a weaver cuz I just get a little scrap here and a little scrap there and sew them together and...

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins will continue in a moment

(break)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

(First Family)

Rich: I am very very fortunate that I come from a family that is real family oriented and our extended family is. You know, when I was growing up I had uncles and aunts.... my uncle Loren brought dilly bars every Friday night up to the house. And my great grandma would read to me and tell me stories every afternoon for my nap. If my mom had to go to town, I

had aunts and uncles everywhere I could stay with. And they all lived within a few yards of each other. What I discovered is heritage doesn't puff you up with pride. It really humbles you. If you look at the lives of the people you have come from and you kind of go, if they had married anyone else, if they had moved anywhere else, if their lives had been one iota different, you wouldn't be here. And so you have not a big debt, not a crushing debt to pay, but you are part of an ongoing thing. You are not alone in the world. You are part of an ensemble.

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

Rich: Its like my dad who died when he was 60. He died good. He had a stroke and was gone instantly.

Rick Tarrant: Wow. That's a good way to die.

Rich: Yeah. And the cool thing is that he was out working in the nursery. He was digging a tree and my mom was right by him. And you know my mom and he had been married for forty something years and he loved working so the last thing he saw in this life was the woman he loved and the last thing he did in this life was dig a tree and who knows what he saw on the other side. I think my dad had that adolescent illusion that he was going to live forever and that he was invincible and that nothing bad was ever going to happen to him. And because of that, I think he was a little reckless, not in terms of ...because I appreciate and enjoy my dad's recklessness in terms of , he would do anything, anytime, anywhere. But I think he was a little negligent in terms of ...I think he never really told a lot of people in his family how much he loved them because, first of all he assumed that we knew. And second of all I think he always assumed that there would be plenty of opportunity. In the last three or four years of his life, after he realized that he was mortal, he was a very very changed man and the relationship was completely restored in that amount of time. Looking at that, I kind of go, boy God is a good God. He will complete our lives. He will impute His holiness onto us. And I think part of holiness is having right relationships with other people.

(Boy Like Me/Man Like You)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins

Rich Mullins: One song that is likely to be released is a song called Boy Like Me/Man Like You and we wrote that in Illinois. This guy came and was telling me that they had used Awesome God on this picket line and I was hoping it was like a rescue mission or something like that and he said no, we were picketing the movie The Last Temptation of Christ. And I said "Oh (and I'm not as dumb as I act sometimes - I played stupid) Why

were you picketing that movie?" And he said, "Why haven't you heard? This is a terrible movie. It portrays Christ as being a man." I said, "Wow that is really weird because I thought that was the Good News was that God had become a man." And I realized that the movie probably failed. I didn't see it myself so I can't say. But I understand the movie failed to portray Christ as being divine as well as being a man. So, after that, Beaker and I started talking about the whole mystery of the incarnation, ooooooohhhhh big heavy theological thinking. But what it all comes down to is, what would it be like to be God almighty and to inspire those phophets to write all those great books and Moses to write those books and then to have to become a little boy and endure Hebrew school and listen to some rabbi rattle on about something that you wrote before he was ever born? What would it be like to be Christ? I mean, did He ever play ball? Did they ever knock a window out of somebody's house and did He ever have to explain to His dad that He had to borrow $12.00? So, we just started talking about what a weird thing it would be to be God and then to become flesh and then we also went on and just talked about what a weird thing to be nothing and then to become flesh. That at one time we were nothing and then we got here. And wasn't it great and aren't you glad that you were born? And isn't life full of a lot of loneliness and misery and all those things but who wants to give it up? Nobody! Its a wonderful thing. Isn't it great to have legs?

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins. More conversations with Rich when we return.

(break)

John Rivers: Thank you for allowing us to bring you this special edition of 20: The Countdown Magazine as we remember Rich Mullins.

(Hello Old Friends)

John Rivers: Rich Mullins

Rich: I am a very very blessed person in terms of friends. What I look for in a friendship is someone who will beat you up. You get in a big fight with them and then the winner rides the other guy home on the bike. One of the things I appreciate about traveling with Beaker is that he just really doesn't cut me a lot of slack because I can be a real whiner and a real complainer. Ohhhh nooooo, you gotta..... He just goes, "Well don't then. If you don't want to do it don't but don't gripe about it . If you're going to do it be glad you get to do it." So its kind of cool because friendship is a very big deal to me.

(What Susan Said)

Rick Tarrant: Are you married?

Rich: No

Rick Tarrant: Do you want to be?

Rich: Someday. Why? Are you proposing? (laughing all around)

Rick Tarrant: Strike this (still laughing).

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

Rich: I would always be frustrated with all those relationships even when I was engaged. I had a ten year thing with this girl and I would often wonder why, even in those most intimate moments of our relationship, I would still feel really lonely. And it was just a few years ago that I finally realized that friendship is not a remedy for loneliness. Loneliness is a part of our experience and if we are looking for relief from loneliness in friendship, we are only going to frustrate the friendship. Friendship, camaraderie, intimacy, all those things, and loneliness live together in the same experience.

Rick Tarrant: We always think about you being the...

Rich: the happy celibate

Rick Tarrant: The happy celibate, yeah.

Sherry Rivers, (John's wife): The quintessential bachelor who is not looking

Rich: Well I think I am that now and you know a lot of people really don't get it but I kind of go, you know what? I'm not a real..... I don't know. I have no interest in anybody else and she is married to someone else so that's the way it goes and I don't mind that. Right now I cannot imagine that life could be happier married than it is single so I'm not in a panic about getting married. And I think, you know, maybe God wanted me to be celibate and the way that he accomplished that was to break my heart. So that's the way it goes.

(The River)

Rich: When I wrote Doubly Good For You, we were getting married, and I had written that for our wedding. A friend of mine said, "Boy that is a really cruel song." And I said, "Well, why?" and she said, "Because you are inferring that if God doesn't give you a love that is centered around someone that is true that he hasn't been doubly good to you. I'm like, "Well, exactly." But God doesn't have to be singly good to anybody. We all have got it better than we deserve so we should be thankful for what we have.

John Rivers: You are listening to a very special broadcast of 20: The Countdown Magazine as we endeavor to pay tribute to a man we can never really repay, Rich Mullins.

(break)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins. The Monday morning after losing Rich, I received a fax from another friend, a friend of Rich's in fact, Billy Crockett. I think it only appropriate that we share that with you. "Sunday, September 21, 1997 I found out last night that Rich Mullins was killed in a car crash. This is hard to swallow for anybody who knew him or his songs much at all. Rich's quirky life got inside us. His worked moved and disturbed us in its relentless homage to the truth of Christ. So full of whimsy the sound of the eternal ringing in his ears, Rich was famous for being clueless and profound at the same time. He was both an eccentric stranger and a friend to me. I played and sang on his albums. We did concerts together. Being part of his music is one of the cherished hallmarks of my life. I suppose its not real surprising that his life ended abruptly. He did seem to live like a meteorite. The reckless raging fury of God's love is what he was on to. I simply hoped for more chapters, more chances, more strange improvisational occasions to play for and glimpse the wild heart of a true believer. So good-bye Rich. Go headlong into the mystery of God. I am grateful to have lived during your lifetime. Billy" From Billy Crockett.

(Bound to Come Some Trouble)

Rich: God is a good God. He will complete our lives. He will impute his holiness onto us. The wonderful thing about God is that I deeply feel that once we come into the covenant through Jesus, once we have come through the way with him, that God really sees Christ when he looks at us and the sin in our life really is buried with Christ. And when God looks on us he sees what Christ has imputed onto us. And the work of the Spirit is just to get us to catch up with what has already happened.

(My One Thing)

John Rivers: Incomparable words from Rich Mullins. The reckless raging fury that is the love of God. 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins will continue in a moment.

Rich: From when I was real little, I heard stories about people from Holland, people from Ireland, people from France, wherever our family came from. My grandma was an orphan. My grandpa ended up, being, unfortunately, an elected official but none of us held that against him too long.

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine Remembers Rich Mullins

(Here in America)

Rich: I think the big problem is that, as Christians, we forgot that our identity is wrapped up in Christ and for a long time we bought into the illusion that the will of the masses would be more generous and more benevolent than the will of one dictator. But democracy isn't necessarily bad politics, its just bad math. A thousand corrupt minds are just as evil as one corrupt mind.

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins.

Rich: I'm very hurt at the apathy in the church. I'm very hurt over the determination of the government to destroy life and its not simply over the abortion issue. Anyone who has any awareness at all of Wounded Knee, not only the first Wounded Knee but what happened there, what 20 years ago, whatever. You kinda go, there can be no doubt that governments that are controlled by men are without exception anti-life and anti-Christ.

(The Just Shall Live)

Rich: I think for a long time I believed that there would be political solutions because, growing up in America, you endure several political campaigns and these people make promises and they say, we will do this and we will do that and you believe them because you don't know any better. And I really believed for a long time that this was all going to work. And I thank God now for Richard Nixon and for Gerald Ford and for all those people who betrayed any confidence that the American people could have in their government who said that the leadership of this country is not accountable to the people who elect them and who made so clear what we now know that no government works. And I wanted the government to work. And what I have now realized is I used to make fun of the sentimental feeling of the church that there was an afterlife. I used to mock songs about Heaven. And I used to think that it was somehow stupid and even wicked to dream of Heaven and to long for Heaven. And now I see the kind of a horrible place earth really is. And I go hiking and I go, this could be so beautiful. I met the guy last night sweeping the stairs down there and I talked to this very gentle man, a very kind man, a very simple man and I thought, how could a world made up of people like this be such a horrible place. And then I pick up the paper and read about dishonesty and deceit and betrayal and all that and go, I do long for Heaven. Someday God will destroy injustice. Someday there will be a judgment and because we have a loving and a forgiving Father, maybe we'll survive it. If we don't, sometimes I think hell is better than what we deserve anyway.

John Rivers: This is John Rivers. Our tribute to Rich Mullins will continue in just a moment

on 20: The Countdown Magazine.

(break)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers Rich Mullins. I'm your host John Rivers. In the summer of 1996, Reunion Records released a wonderful collection from Rich Mullins, kind of a best of collection simply entitled Songs. We thought it was simply the end of a chapter in Rich's life. We didn't realize it was the end of the book. Of all the songs that he had written, Rich said his favorite was Elijah. He recorded it on his first album. He rerecorded it for his final album. When asked why he redid it, he simply said, "Because nobody listened the first time." We're listening now Rich.

(Elijah)

John Rivers: 20: The Countdown Magazine remembers our friend Rich Mullins. I'm John Rivers. I remember when I first met Rich standing against a lightpost or a lamppost, whatever it was, outside of some really beautiful hotel in Nashville, Tennessee in our big convention in the spring back in the 80's when he wasn't too famous yet but just famous enough to be brought to Nashville. And showing off was something he felt really uncomfortable with. He was dressed typically Rich - he may have even been barefooted, can't remember. Unpretentious, maybe a service station Dickies shirt on and trousers. Kathy Sprinkle, a dear friend, was with him at the time. Had a burr haircut. I already loved his music and I thought I recognized him so I said, "Rich!" He said, "Yes." "John Rivers," I introduced myself and asked if I could buy his lunch and he said, "Yeah, love it, kinda hungry anyway" so we go in this fancy hotel, this ritzy restaurant where he probably felt a little uncomfortable. It wasn't Rich's kind of place. We sat down to lunch, one of those places where the entree is $19.95 you know and started eating. Rich looked at me and said, "Have you read Tozer? heheheh Chesterton? I said, "No" and he says, "Well you can't be a Christian." Kidding of course. Later, throughout the years he would send me various books by his favorite authors. He talked to me about Brennan Manning, Tozer, G.K. Chesterton. In fact he sent me The Romance of Faith, Orthodoxy, by G.K Chesterton circa 1900 as I recall. On the inside front cover he wrote me a note saying, "Man here is the book I promised ya. If you have already bought it, please throw that one away and keep this one. It'll make me feel better." Then he referred me to the pages that were maybe most important to him. Who can forget, maybe at that same big convention, at that gigantic dinner we used to have after the Dove Awards. They had every unimaginable food and everyone was dressed to the nines and Rich Mullins was there and he felt so uncomfortable in that rich setting so to speak. I'm going along the dessert line and I see, I think, a guy who is Rich Mullins, who has relieved one of the servers and has now donned their white jacket and their little white chefs hat or whatever it was and is serving desserts to all these people after the Dove awards. I think most of them didn't even know it was

him. But that was Rich Mullins. He'd rather be behind the counter serving than out with the folks in their fancy duds. Rich Mullins was the real thing. Rich Mullins loved Jesus. I loved him and still do.

(If I Stand)

The End

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